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Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg
Department of English/American and Romance Studies
SS 2017 [summer/winter term, year]
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GS Literature [course title]

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How to Write a Term Paper

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[first and last name]
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[student registration number]
[degree programme, subject combination, semester]
[submission date]

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1 Introduction: Aims of a Term Paper

The purpose of a written assignment is to demonstrate your ability to grasp, present and discuss a specific academic question. Written assignments are not essays. If they are done in the Humanities at a German university, they constitute a distinct academic genre (the *Hausarbeit*). Like any other genre, they follow a specific set of conventions, and there are historical reasons for some of these. For example, written assignments were meant to prepare you, eventually, for the publication of a doctoral thesis; this is why they still follow the structure of a book (“Table of Contents”, “Introduction”, “Conclusion”, “Bibliography” or “Works Cited”). While the actual reader might be your lecturer, the *implied reader* is a well-informed academic peer group, and the writing style is not conversational but analytical, clear and concise. Please note that a written assignment in Linguistics may follow slightly different conventions than an assignment in British Studies or in American Studies.

The form of the written assignment often follows the recommendations of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*,¹ and while some variations are possible, it is vital that you are consistent in the presentation and documentation of your material.² In terms of content, a well-written term paper demonstrates that you are able to research a topic comprehensively, analyse (primary) texts thoroughly, choose quotations from primary as well as secondary literature that substantiate your thesis and write a coherent paper that follows the style sheet, is neither too long nor too short and handed in on time. As the extent of a written assignment is restricted (10-12 pages for a *Proseminar*, 15-20 pages for a *Hauptseminar*), you should concentrate on central aspects of your topic and dispense with overlong quotations. Not everything you have read or researched will end up in your written assignment – make sure that you select your material carefully by concentrating on the thesis you have formulated in your introduction, and use your table of contents to structure your material accordingly. Your paper should be written in academic prose – please note that academic English texts (in contrast to some academic German texts) tend to do without long-winded sentences and are characterised by an exact use of terminology.

¹ Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 5th ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1999).

² This is a meta-paper following the exact same conventions you are asked to implement in your own written assignment. It is in parts identical with the “Written Assignments Style Sheet”, which you can download from the English department’s website (https://www.anglistik.phil.fau.de/files/2016/10/Written_Assignments_Style_Sheet.pdf, v. 4-2016).

If I am the supervisor of your written assignment, please note that I will *not* accept your term paper if you have not come to see me during my office hours in order to talk about your topic. You need to hand in your written assignments three weeks after class has ended (*Proseminar*) or six weeks after class has ended (*Hauptseminar*). Please contact me immediately if you encounter any problems concerning the structure or overall organisation of your term paper. The choice of topic is yours (finding a fitting topic is part of your assignment, but I will help you specify your topic) – note that students generally encounter less trouble writing and completing their term paper if they are genuinely interested in their topic, the seemingly pragmatic choice is not necessarily the best choice for you. This meta-*Hausarbeit* is your mandatory style sheet that should provide you with all the necessary information concerning layout, formatting, content and quoting.

2 Structure

2.1 Title, Title Page and Sections

Assignments consist of the following sections (in this order):

- a title page
- the table of contents (*Inhaltsverzeichnis*)
- an introduction, a main part and a conclusion (approx. 10–12 text pages for basic seminars [*Proseminare*], 15–20 pages for advanced seminars [*Hauptseminare*])
- a bibliography
- appendices (if required)
- an affidavit (*Wahrheitsgemäße Erklärung*). This must be signed and attached to the assignment. (Since the affidavit is not part of the assignment itself, it is usually not included in the table of contents.)

The function of the title is to state, as concisely as possible, the topic of the *Hausarbeit* and, where appropriate, to name the specific text(s) you analyse – e.g. “Mirror-Imagery in Baz Luhrmann’s *Romeo+Juliet* (1996)” (on the title page, the title is not enclosed in quotation marks). A title usually does not take the form of a full sentence or a question (use your introduction to pose the central questions of your paper). Choose the title carefully since it delimits exactly what you need to address in your *Hausarbeit* and what not. A title such as “Representations of Women in Shakespeare” is far too general and would present you with two impossible choices: it would either commit you to write about *all* female characters in *every* Shakespeare play, or to argue convincingly in your

introduction why the few plays you do focus on are, in fact, representative examples of all the other plays.

2.2 *Table of Contents*

The table of contents gives a full outline of the assignment. Headings are numbered 1, 1.1, 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2, 2, etc. Page numbers and the wording of chapter titles (which again should be brief) must correspond to the text. Please make sure to use 1.1 only if there is also a subchapter 1.2. Note that the table of contents is meant to facilitate reading (and correcting) your written assignment – your chapter headings and subsections should therefore mirror the **structure** of your paper and serve to emphasise **clarity**. In terms of writing, this also means that subsections should neither be too long (rule of thumb: longer than 2 pages) nor too short (significantly less than 1 page). Neither the title page nor the table of contents have a page number – your page 1 is the introduction, then.

2.3 *Introduction and Conclusion*

The purpose of the introduction is to give a clear and concise statement of your topic. It establishes the academic context and the critical framework of your analysis, names and discusses the critical approach(es) and method(s) you will employ, and defines and discusses your critical concepts, categories and terms. (A useful way to start thinking about critical terms would be consulting as many up-to-date glossaries, such as Metzler's *Lexikon Literatur- und Kulturtheorie*, as possible.) Your introduction should not simply restate the title of your paper (which can be found on your title page), nor should it simply repeat the general structure once more (see Table of Contents) but it should give a clear and concise thesis statement.

In your conclusion, you could sum up your main points again (if necessary) and/or indicate further areas of research that you were not able to touch upon. Emphasise your own results: How did you work with your initial thesis, how did you answer the question that, ideally, guided and structured your analysis? If you decide to point out open questions or further trajectories of analysis, make sure that you do not belittle what you have achieved in your written assessment – too many open questions might indicate that your paper was not a success.

2.4 *Main Part*

The function of the main part is to support your proposition and to illustrate your findings. As space is limited, only include arguments that are directly relevant to your specific

topic. A written assignment on Language Acquisition with an emphasis on phonology will, for instance, omit the syntactic aspects of the subject. Your paper is not meant to reflect your learning process (do not include everything that you have read), nor is it meant to ‘educate’ anybody (your readership is an academic peer group). Rather think of it as a well-reasoned statement – your contribution to an ongoing academic discussion about a very specific topic (the one in your title). Do not include historical or biographical ‘background information’ just because it seems interesting in itself – only include material that is relevant within the narrow confines of your topic. Avoid extremely long quotes or simply stringing together a sequence of quotes – your readers are interested in how you *assess* the ideas of others, and in your own arguments. You should also avoid excessive use of meta-text to structure your paper (“First, I will...”, “I will now discuss...”).

The main part has its own heading and subheadings and needs to be clearly structured. It should focus on primary material (primary texts, corpus data, etc.) which you analyse in detail, and it must incorporate seminal and up-to-date secondary literature as well. The text is split into *paragraphs* – each paragraph presents one line of thought or one carefully developed argument. Paragraphs consisting of only one sentence are almost always inadequate (they rarely comprise carefully developed arguments), as are overly long paragraphs that stretch across a page or more (they usually consist of more than one main argument). In order to mark the beginning of a new paragraph, slightly larger line spacing (around 3 pt) can be used. Alternatively, the first line of paragraphs *that are preceded by another paragraph* can be indented (i.e. the first paragraph after a heading is not indented). This is the method used in this document.

Use a clear and concise academic style throughout (including the introduction) and try to be as precise and consistent as possible in your use of terminology. Focus on facts and arguments only. Avoid platitudes (e.g. “The question of identity is more important today than ever before”) and purely subjective opinions (“Personally I find the text rather uninteresting”). Also avoid all historical or cultural generalisations, e.g.

- “Americans have rigid sexual morals.” Speaking of ‘all Americans’ at all times is an invalid generalisation since sexual morals have historically been specific to one’s class, sex, age, region, religion and other factors.
- “In former times,…” – are you referring to 1968 or the 4th century BC? Be as precise as possible, otherwise you are implying that the past is homogenous and things have always been the same.

- “We”, “us” – do not presume to speak for people who may not share your values and norms. Always specify the specific social/cultural group for which you make a statement.
- Terms like ‘positive’, ‘negative’, ‘good’ or ‘bad’ always imply a norm against which things are measured. You need to supply that norm and specify *for whom* exactly you think it is valid.

Finally, clearly distinguish between... (a) the terms, concepts (and with them, values and norms) used in the texts you analyse; (b) the critical concepts and terms which you are applying yourself. For example, the implicit understanding of ‘race’ in a text by Kipling is *what* you analyse (a). The concepts *with which* you analyse this text, however, might be ‘alterity’ or ‘othering’ (b) – they allow you to understand how a specific concept of ‘race’ was used in the 19th century. If you simply adopt the terminology of texts you analyse, you run the risk of adopting the values and norms implicit in them. This is a very common and basic mistake that you need to avoid.

2.5 Bibliography

The “Bibliography” (or “Works Cited”) needs to include full bibliographical references for all sources cited in the text (both primary and secondary). Secondary literature must be relevant and (preferably) up-to-date. No matter what your specific topic is, and even if nobody has written on it before, there will always be plenty of secondary literature: The critical approach you have chosen, the concepts with which you operate – all these have been explored by other academics. If you fail to acknowledge them, your paper will not meet academic standards and you will automatically receive a poor grade.

Bibliographical references are sorted alphabetically according to the authors’ surnames. The bibliography should be single-spaced and formatted with hanging indentation so that the second and all following lines of a source are automatically indented for improved legibility. With regard to the order of individual elements within an entry, there are slightly different conventions in Linguistics and Literary/Cultural Studies (see below). What all disciplines have in common, however, is that they distinguish between

- titles of longer publications that can stand by themselves (*selbständige Publikationen*). These include the titles of books, films, albums, TV shows, etc. They are usually printed in *italics*:

Wordsworth, William, and S. T. Coleridge. *Lyrical Ballads, with a Few Other Poems*. London: Printed for J. & A. Arch, 1798.

- titles of shorter publications that are part of other publications (*nicht-selbständige Publikationen*): a single poem in an anthology, an essay in an essay collection, the title of a song, an episode in a TV series, etc. These are not italicized. Except for Linguistics, they are put in quotation marks, as with the following single poem from *Lyrical Ballads*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere." In Linguistics, neither italics nor quotation marks are used.

The *medium* of each source has to be apparent from the entry in the bibliography. For this reason, the MLA recommends including the medium after each entry (i.e. 'print', 'film', 'web', 'television', etc.; this does not apply to citations in the main body of the text). Consider carefully which medium you will have to list: If you analyse a TV series or a film that was available to you on DVD, you will have to cite the specific DVD edition – and in a written assignment in Cultural Studies, you might reflect on the fact that you did not, in fact, analyse a film but a different *text* altogether. (A DVD is an interactive medium that allows for non-sequential access and gives viewers sound and commentary options; some DVD editions even offer different versions of films, such as the 'theatrical release version' or the 'director's cut').

2.6 Affidavit [*Wahrheitsgemäße Erklärung*]

By signing the affidavit and attaching it to your paper, you declare that you made a clear distinction between your own ideas and those of others throughout your paper. If you violate this code of practice, you are guilty of plagiarism and your paper will automatically receive a fail grade ("nicht bestanden"). A single passage in your text is enough to constitute such an offence. It is also considered plagiarism to translate text passages and present them as your own (i.e. without a reference). You will need to sign the declaration and attach it to your paper (see end of this meta-*Hausarbeit*).

3 Academic Conventions

3.1 Formatting

For your main body of text, use justified type alignment (*Blocksatz*), a line spacing of 1.5 lines and either Times New Roman (font size 12 pt) or Arial (11 pt). Top and bottom margins should be 2 cm, left margins 2.5 cm and right margins 3.5 cm in order to leave space for corrections. (This document has been formatted accordingly, using Times New Roman 12 pt.) Note that increasing margins, enlarging font size or as line spacing as well as the overuse of paragraphs and subsections in order to expand your paper in order to mask missing content is immediately visible and will be reflected in your grade.

Use accentuations [*Hervorhebungen*] sparingly, as they are mostly already linked to content or formatting by academic convention. **Bold** script is never used in running text (but can be used for chapter titles). As already noted, the titles of longer publications (books, journals, plays, longer poems) are formatted in *italics*; the same applies to letters or words that are discussed specifically, foreign-language expressions (as long as they have not yet been naturalized – e-mail would no longer be italicized in German, for example) and words that you want to highlight visually.³ “Double quotation marks” are used for non-indented quotations as well as titles of shorter publications (such as essays in journals or collected editions), short stories and shorter poems. ‘Single quotation marks’ are used for quotations within quotations (“‘Jump!’, he said.”) as well as translations or definitions of individual words and phrases. Please make sure that you consistently use “English” quotation marks (rather than those following the „German“ convention).

3.2 *Quoting and Paraphrasing*

With your written assignment, you are meant to enter into a critical dialogue with other researchers who have worked on the same academic topic. For this reason, you have to present their arguments and views in an accurate and adequate manner. This is done with the help of *quotations* (verbatim quotes from other texts) and *paraphrases* (summaries of the ideas or texts of others in your own words). In both cases, it is imperative that

- you *introduce* and *contextualise* all quotations and paraphrases. The quotations or ideas you incorporate into your text originate in different times and contexts, they may follow different critical approaches, etc. Therefore, it must be immediately apparent who said what, when, and in what academic context, and why and how this is relevant for your argument. Such contextualisations do not have to be detailed; in the case of well-known texts they can be brief (such as providing a date). Avoid simply stringing together quotations.
- all quotations be reproduced to the letter. The original punctuation or the use of italics and bold type must also be repeated. Quotations have to correspond exactly to the original text (except for omissions, which are marked by the use of “[...]”). The wording or spelling of a citation may not be changed in any way. Even typographical errors are not corrected (they are followed by “[*sic*]” to indicate that the error occurred in the original text).

³ Please note that you need to be consistent – if you italicize a word once, it has to be italicized throughout your paper.

- you clearly indicate where your reference begins and where it ends – regardless of whether you quote from, summarize or paraphrase another text. Notes/references are added after sentences or clauses – therefore, if a *whole paragraph* is an extended paraphrase, it is not sufficient to simply add a note at the end (this would only identify the last sentence as a paraphrase). In cases where you summarize somebody else’s ideas in more than one sentence, you should clearly indicate this at the beginning of the paraphrase: A clause like “According to Dave Alvin,” may introduce a paraphrase, the reference will then terminate it.

All quotations must be directly relevant to your argument. All titles (as well as all authors) mentioned in the main body of the text and in the footnotes *must* be listed in the bibliography; this also applies to indirectly quoted authors (see below). When formatting quotations, we usually distinguish between longer and shorter quotes:

- **short quotations** in quotation marks (see above): shorter quotations (fewer than three lines of printed text) are incorporated into the running text and enclosed in double quotation marks. Quotations within a shorter quotation are put in single quotation marks (‘xyz’). With verse, strokes (“/”) indicate line breaks: “Because I could not stop for Death, / He kindly stopped for me; / The carriage held but just ourselves” (Emily Dickinson, “Because I could not stop for death”, ll. 1–3).
- **long quotations** are indented: Quotations that are longer than three lines are set apart from the rest of the text; *no* additional quotation marks are used in this case. They form a new paragraph which is slightly indented on both sides and single-spaced; the first line of the first paragraph is not indented further. The font size is reduced by 1 pt. Verse is quoted as follows:

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality. (ll. 1–4)

Here are some more guidelines to consider:

- Pay close attention to the **academic credibility** of sources, especially **online sources**. Online sources often do not adhere to basic academic quality standards; therefore, you should take great care in deciding whether to use them or not:
 - *Do not* quote online sources if you cannot guarantee that academic standards have been met. Unfortunately, this excludes many of them. Consider whether the institution hosting the text seems trustworthy (an official university server, a respected academic online journal, etc.).

- *Do not* use *Wikipedia*-entries or similar sources. This is not necessarily a question of quality; the reason is rather that entries are the product of collaborative work and do not specify their author(s). According to the (predigital) conventions of the genre *Hausarbeit*, however, the author has an important function: he/she takes responsibility for maintaining proper academic standards and guarantees that the factual content meets these standards completely. If you cannot name an author, this responsibility shifts to you.
- Only quote **research literature** – not student guides, lecture notes or handouts you obtained in class. Handbooks and glossaries of critical terms often are very good and reliable sources of information and while it is also acceptable to cite introductory textbooks, these sources must only be used in addition to original research literature discussed in them.
- Avoid **indirect quotations**: Only quote texts that you have read yourself. Indirect quotations (i.e. quoting somebody else’s quotation of a text) should be avoided as far as possible. They are only admissible if a primary source is permanently unavailable – for example, because it is out of print (the mere fact that it is not available in your department’s library simply means that you have to put in the effort of obtaining it elsewhere). Quoting indirectly is indicated by the use of “qtd. in”.
- If you edit out parts of a quotation, use an **ellipsis** (three dots enclosed in square brackets: [...]). An ellipsis is not normally used at the beginning or the end of a quotation – your reader will assume that your quote was part of a longer text.
- Only quote **longer passages** if you analyse or discuss them in detail, and do not paraphrase a passage that you just quoted. If you include a long, indented quotation in your text, your analysis of this quotation should be *at least* as long as the quotation itself.
- Foreign language quotations must be reproduced in the original language; if necessary, they can be followed by a translation.
- *Italics* carry meaning (they denote emphasis, indicate stage directions in play texts, etc.). Therefore, the use of italics throughout, simply to mark a passage as a quotation, is not established practice in English and American Studies. If there are italics in a text you quote, you must also include them in your quotation. If you yourself want to emphasise a word or phrase within a quote, you can also use italics, but you need to indicate that the emphasis is yours. This is done by adding “italics mine” or “emphasis added” in square brackets after the quotation (or, if applicable, in a footnote).

3.3 References

3.3.1 Parentheses

References are not only required when using quotations but whenever you paraphrase the ideas or arguments of others. This does not apply to facts that are considered common knowledge within an academic field – you do not need to provide a reference to argue that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* or to define the term *phoneme*. (However, if you define phonemes in a particular way in a phonological paper, or if you argue that the Earl of Oxford, posing as Shakespeare, wrote *Hamlet*, references are needed after all.) There are several referencing conventions. The two most commonly used methods are (1) parentheses within the text and (2) footnotes at the bottom of the page. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages: References in parentheses save space but they may result in a text that is cumbersome to read, and in cases where many references are given, it may be difficult to attribute individual quotations. The use of footnotes allows for an uninterrupted flow of your argument but can make the paper rather lengthy. Please note that in American Studies and in Linguistics, the former of the two methods must be used. The underlying principle here is economy, i.e. the greatest possible brevity:

- Author named in reference: “In his latest statements, he regretted ‘the neverending Festschrift craze’ (Killjoy 120).”
- Author named in text: “In his latest statements, J. R. Killjoy regretted ‘the neverending Festschrift craze’ (120).”
- Author cited indirectly through another source: “(Killjoy in Smartalleck 25)”.
- Quoting from indirect sources is only admissible if the primary source is no longer available (see above).
- Two or more texts by the same author: The author’s name is either followed by a comma and a short form of the title (Killjoy, “Manual” 13) or by the year of publication plus comma (Killjoy 1995, 13) – if an author published two works in one year, simply add lower-case letters (Iser 1988a, 123).
- Texts by two authors: Name both authors, e.g. “Harriet and Millar (*Appreciations* 47) have examined this issue in detail...”
- Texts by three or more authors: Give the first author’s name and use the abbreviation *et al.*
- Indented quotation with author named in text: Kingsley Amis takes a slightly different stance:

The point of Felix Leiter, such a nonentity as a piece of characterization, is that he, the American, takes orders from Bond, the Britisher, and that Bond is constantly doing better than he, showing himself, not braver or more devoted, but smarter,

wittier, tougher, more resourceful, the incarnation of little old England with her quiet ways and shoestring budget wiping the eye of great big global-tentacled multibillion-dollarappropriating America. (70)

- Indented quotation without author named in text: Other scholars have taken a slightly different stance:

The point of Felix Leiter, such a nonentity as a piece of characterization, is that he, the American, takes orders from Bond, the Britisher, and that Bond is constantly doing better than he, showing himself, not braver or more devoted, but smarter, wittier, tougher, more resourceful, the incarnation of little old England with her quiet ways and shoestring budget wiping the eye of great big global-tentacled multibillion-dollarappropriating America. (Amis 70)

N.B.: In Linguistics, all references contain the name of the author and year of publication. If you reference a text passage from a longer text, also include the page number: Croft and Cruse (2004: 231) characterise construction grammar as a “cognitive linguistic approach to syntax”. The verb can be seen as “the most ‘central’ element” of the sentence (Quirk et al. 1985: 50).

3.3.2 Footnotes

While the MLA recommends parentheses, footnotes are also frequently used, especially in British academic publications. With footnotes, it is customary to give a full bibliographical reference the first time a work is mentioned,⁴ and a shorter one with subsequent references. Unlike entries in a bibliography, references in footnotes form a syntactic unit: the author’s first name precedes the last name; individual items are separated by commas, place and year of publication and publisher are placed in brackets. “University Press” is usually abbreviated as “UP”. In subsequent references,⁵ simply give the author’s surname, a short title of work, the page number. If it is clear which text you refer to (e.g. with a text that you have already analysed at some length) and if the exact reference was already given at a previous point, simple page numbers, enclosed in brackets, can also be used in the main text.

Footnotes are further used for explanatory notes – for example thoughts and observations that support the line of argument of the main text. All footnotes are single-spaced and should be in the same font but with a smaller font size (minus 1 pt).

⁴ “Some of Dickinson’s most powerful poems express her firmly held conviction that life cannot be fully comprehended without an understanding of death”. Wendy Martin, *Emily Dickinson’s Literary Heritage* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988), 109-23.

⁵ Martin, *Emily Dickinson*, 625.

3.4 Capitalisation in Titles and Subtitles

There are exact capitalisation rules for titles and subtitles in English. In all subject areas except in Linguistics, they apply to the title of your paper and to the titles of works you quote in your bibliography. The first word, the last word and all ‘important terms’ (including the second part of a hyphenated compound term) are capitalised. ‘Important terms’ usually include:

- nouns (*The Birth of Tragedy*, not *The birth of tragedy*)
- pronouns (e.g. ‘our’ in *One of Our Thursdays is Missing* and ‘that’ in *The Myths That Made America*)
- verbs
- adjectives
- adverbs

Lower case is used for:

- articles (*Under the Bamboo Tree*)
- prepositions (*The Merchant of Venice*)
- coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet*)
- *to* in the infinitive (*How to Write a Research Paper*)
- subordinating conjunctions (*after, although, as if, as soon as, because, before, if, that, unless, until, when, where, while*; e.g. *The Critic as Artist*)

Also pay attention to these capitalisation conventions for your own headings and subheadings, especially in Literary and Cultural Studies (“Table of Contents” instead of “Table of contents”)

In Linguistics, these rules only apply to the title of your paper. Capitalization in the bibliography follows the *Unified style sheet for linguistics* cited: “Use capitalization of all lexical words for journal titles and capitalize only the first word (plus proper names and the first word after a colon) for book/dissertation titles and article/chapter titles.” (Unified style sheet for linguistics: 1)

3.5 Proofreading

Do not forget to thoroughly proofread your paper after finalising it. Pay attention to correct spelling; noticeable deficiencies in this area will influence the assessment of your work and, in extreme cases, can lead to it being rejected. Before you submit your written assignment, you should also ensure that you have observed the following formal conventions throughout your work:

- Correct punctuation and spacing: A single period or a comma are usually followed by a space. For instance, “p.5” is wrong; “p. 5” would be correct. Brackets and quotation marks, however, directly precede or follow their content:
 - *wrong*:
so that they “ become conscious of fundamental conflicts on the level of ideology”(Gramsci , *Prison Notebooks* 164) 7.
 - *correct*:
so that they “become conscious of fundamental conflicts on the level of ideology” (Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* 164).7
- Double quotation marks indicate a quotation, single ones indicate a change in language or register, a definition of the meaning of a word (as in: “the lexeme *pupil* has the meanings ‘student’ and ‘part of the eye’”), or a quotation within a quotation (see above).
- **quotations marks** (see above): Both single and double quotation marks come in many shapes and forms; in addition to "straight ones" and “typographic ones,” there is also an “English” convention (with marks looking like a 66 followed by a 99), a „German one“ (99 [bottom] followed by 66 [top]), and a «French» one. Be consistent and use the same type of quotation marks throughout your paper – even if you quote from a text that adheres to a different convention.
- **dashes** are not **hyphens**: Differentiate between dashes – they separate parts of a sentence and are preceded and followed by a space – and hyphens, which separate parts of compounds and are not preceded or followed by a space (as in *nineteenth-century literature*).
- **accents** are not **apostrophes**: The French *accent grave* (˘) and *accent aigu* (˙) are located next to the backspace key. This is not the same as the key you will frequently have to use – the apostrophe key (as in *Eve’s*).

4 Conclusion: Checklist

Please make sure that, before handing in your written assignment, your text is free from the following mistakes:

- The **title** of your paper is overlong and/or a question: “With what Means Does Director Oliver Stone Try to Convince the Viewer of his Conspiracy to Murder the President in *JFK*” ([*sic*] – original title of a written assignment handed in at the English

Department). Your title should name the topic of your written assignment in a more abstract or condensed fashion (e.g. “Conspiracy Theories in Oliver Stone’s *JFK*”).

- Your **introduction** is merely a repetition of the title of your paper and/or the table of contents. Please make sure that your introduction contains a clearly formulated **thesis**.
- You use **unnecessary paragraphs** as well as **page breaks** in order to mask that your written assignment is not long enough.
- You do not **substantiate** your **claims** (with adequate explanations, quotations and references): Your propositions have to be documented with references to the primary text and/or sources that are quoted (and cited) according to academic standards.
- Not all **paraphrases** or **assumptions** taken from secondary material are referenced. Note that this will be assessed as plagiarism (which will lead to you automatically failing your assignment).
- Your paper includes **summaries** of the texts you analyse or even the **complete quotation** of shorter primary texts such as poems – your reader is always an informed reader who knows the texts you analyse and therefore does not need summaries or quotations that are not included for the sake of extended analysis.
- Unnecessary and unmotivated **textbook knowledge** is reproduced in the main body of your text: “An example for this anti-Petrarchism would be Shakespeare’s sonnet ‘My Mistress’ Eyes’. This sonnet is Shakespeare’s 130th; it follows the English form of the sonnet (another form would be the Italian one): it consists of four quatrains and a couplet.” Passages such as this should be deleted. The same is true for **short biographies** of authors as well as **historical accounts** if biography and/or history are not necessary for your analysis.
- **Footnotes** do not refer to the main body of the text – use footnotes sparingly and only if you can include additional valuable information that you cannot include elsewhere.
- Constant **signposting** describes what you are discussing while you are discussing it (“First, I will...”, “I will now discuss...”, “I think...”, etc.). Use signposting strategically and sparingly.
- Your text is a **collation** of (overlong) quotations rather than a proper analysis. Make sure that your quotations are as concise and possible and that they do not ‘overgrow’ your own words and line of argumentation.
- Your **personal experience** invade your analysis: “This poem reminds me of my childhood...”. Emotional impressionism has no place in an academic essay as it lacks scientific confirmability as well as intersubjective epistemological value.

5 Bibliography

5.1 Book Publications

[monograph, primary literature] Carter, Angela. *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*. London [place of publication]: Virago [publisher], 1995 [year of publication].

[more than 1 work by same author] ----- . *The Passion of New Eve*. London: Virago, 1982.

[monograph, primary literature] Crompton, Richmal. *Just – William*. 1922 [year of first publication]. London: Macmillan, 1989.

[monograph] Alexander, Flora. *Contemporary Women Novelists*. London: Arnold, 1989.

[title of edited collection] Eagleton, Mary, ed. *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

[edited primary work] Shelley, Percy Bysshe. *The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*. Ed. Roger Ingpen and W. E. Peck. 2 vols. London: Ernest Benn, 1965.

[edited secondary work] Barthes, Roland. *A Barthes Reader*. Ed. and intr. Susan Sontag. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.

[film] *Hamlet. The Denmark Corporation*. Dir. Michael Almereyda. Wr. William Shakespeare and Michael Almereyda. Prod. double A Films. Miramax, 2000. DVD Kinowelt Home Entertainment, 2001.

Note that the criteria for the citation of films or computer games have not yet been as fully standardized as those for printed material. Please contact your lecturer for the bibliographic reference she/he prefers.

5.2 Short Texts, Articles and Internet Sources

[article in an edited volume] Fraile Murlanch, Isabel. “The Silent Woman: Silence as Subversion in Angela Carter’s *The Magic Toyshop*.” *Gender, I-Deology. Essays on Theory, Fiction and Film*. Ed. Chantal Cornut Gentille D’Arcy and Landa Jose Angel Garcia. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996. 239-52. [page numbers of article]

[article in a journal] Wolf, Werner. “Literaturtheorie in der Literatur: David Lodges *Small World* als kritische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Dekonstruktivismus.” *Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 14 [volume] (1989) [year of publication]: 19-37. [page numbers of article]

[newspaper article] Lohr, Steve. “Now Playing: Babes in Cyberspace.” *New York Times* 3 Apr. 1998, late ed.: C1+. [this would also include a full URL if you have accessed the newspaper online]

[internet source] Breebaart, Leo, ed. "The Colour of Magic: Annotations." *The Annotated Pratchett File*, v. 7a.0. Web. 18 Dec. 2000. [date of access] <http://www.lspace.org/books/apf/the_colour_of_magic.html>.

[internet source] "Cover-Wahl im Internet: Die deutschen 'Harry Potter'-Leser können im Internet über das neue Cover für den vierten Band der Bestseller-Serie entscheiden." *Spiegel Online*. 14. Nov. 2000. [date of access] <<http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/0,1518,97952,00.html>>.

The *MLA* specifies the following abbreviations for internet sources: n.p. (no publisher given); n.d. (no date of publication given); n. pag. (no pagination, e.g. in journals that are exclusively published online).

The name of the **publisher** should be shortened as much as possible (i.e. without 'Inc.', etc.). Pay attention to capitalisation conventions in all titles (see also 3.3). Consult the 7th ed. of the *MLA Handbook* for additional cases not covered here. Always be consistent in formatting your bibliographical references.

Affidavit

I hereby truthfully declare that

- 1) I wrote the submitted paper independently and without illicit assistance;
- 2) I did not use any materials other than those listed in the bibliography and that all passages taken from these sources in full or in part have been marked as such and their origin has been cited individually in the text stating the version (edition and year of publication), the volume and page of the cited work, and in the case of Internet sources stating the complete URL and the date of access;
- 3) I have listed all institutions and persons that supported me in the preparation and production of the paper;
- 4) I have not submitted the paper to any other institution and that it has never been used for other purposes, neither in full nor in part.

I am aware that any violation of this declaration will result in a fail grade (*nicht bestanden*).

Erlangen,
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